

All Things Local Working Group Draft Minutes

Amethyst Farm

August 22, 2012

Attending: John White, Bernard Brennan, Robin Luberoff, Michelle Parish, John Thibbitts, Tina Clarke (facilitating), Jeremy Barker-Plotkin, and John Gerber (recording).

1. John T. asked for brief introductions to help everyone get a better sense of our individual backgrounds.
2. Robin asked for updates on the action items from the last meeting. Tina is waiting to hear from Martha at Watrobas. Apple Ahern is willing to meet on April 6 to answer questions on cooperatives.
3. Tina asked for a review of the minutes, which was approved.
4. A brief discussion followed on our collective vision for the project and a potential timeline. There was an agreement that we should conduct an informal producer survey and pledge document.
5. There was a discussion about the mission statement. We decided to wait until a future meeting to hammer this out.
6. We reviewed the Local Roots Producer Application form. We suggest:
 - a. Under farm products leave space to describe their growing practices and add a check box for "other" and leave space to describe
 - b. Add a box for "organic grain fed" and "GMO-free"
 - c. Drop the "cage free chickens"
 - d. Add a section under non-food (section 3) to describe their production practices (including materials, labor, energy and financing)
 - e. In the "about us/you" section, drop the sample. Drop "attach additional sheets if necessary".
 - f. In the agreement section, add "if accepted".
 - g. We need an additional Vender Agreement Contract form (Tina will ask Jessica if LR has one)
7. We reviewed the LR Producer Guidelines & Policies document. We suggest:
 - a. Drop the section on online ordering
 - b. State clearly that not everyone will be accepted (our goal is to include as many producers as possible and the manager will decide whom will be accepted). "Inclusion will be at the discretion of the market manager."
 - c. The language for value added products might include a statement about the discretion of the market manager to allow ingredients that can't be grown locally.
 - d. Drop the language that food should have priority over crafts or other products as a policy.
8. We did not have time to discuss the question about a closed or open working group. Is it still possible to add qualified members to this group?

Action Items (to do)

1. Tina will contact Phil Sweeney
2. Jeremy will check with the Winter Market committee to see if there is interest in working together
3. Robin will draft a producer survey and pledge document
4. Jeremy will forward the survey to farmers
5. Michelle will forward the survey to crafters
6. Tina will provide Michelle with additional crafter addresses from Franklin County
7. Tina will brief Apple and send her background documents in preparation for the next meeting
8. Michelle will explore the term "cottage food"
9. Tina will contact Jessica to see if LR has a vendor contract form
10. John will recreate the LR documents for ATL including the changes we approved
11. Everyone should review the Producer Guidelines & Policies document for further review.
12. Everyone should review the proposed mission statements for discussion at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10pm having accomplished a great deal.

**Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 6
at 7:00pm at Amethyst Farm.**

Questions for Apple:

- What is the value of a sliding scale for membership compared to the same fee for everyone?
- Is there a reason to have item 6 in the membership agreement?
- Can/should the secretary and treasurer serve in these positions but not be a member of the board? Member of the coop?
- Should/can we require a super majority for some kinds of votes?
- Should/can we specify board members be balanced among producers and consumers?
- Is there something about a cooperative that requires us to return some portion of the net margin back to members (legally)?
- How do you deal with "surplus"?
- Is it important (for public perception reasons for example) to try to reward participation in the coop?
- Should we require a quorum requirement for a membership meeting?
- Do you have to allow proxies?
- Is there a requirement in the cooperative model that members make an investment?
- Are there particular requirements of the state of Massachusetts relating to cooperatives that we should be aware of?